



Strategic Plan Policy



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1. Purpose

The purpose of this Strategic Plan is define a clear vision and action plan for the future of Westchester County's parks and open space, trail system, recreation facilities, and recreation programs and services. This Plan was adopted by the department on October 12, 2023.

2. The Plan

Following is the Strategic Plan for Westchester County Department of Parks Recreation and Conservation.

STRATEGIC PLAN Westchester County Parks, Recreation & Conservation 2023	
GOAL 1	Improve Parks and Recreation Facilities
<i>Objective A</i>	Update the current Park Master Plan to assess current and future parks and recreation needs
<i>Objective B</i>	Maximize the use of currently owned parks and recreation facilities by expanding with new facilities and rehabilitating old facilities
<i>Objective C</i>	Conduct a County-wide recreation survey to better understand recreation trends and leisure needs
<i>Objective D</i>	Update playgrounds and parks to meet new trends and ADA standards for inclusive play
<i>Objective E</i>	Renovate/update the recreation centers and add additional program space to accommodate all age groups and abilities.
<i>Objective F</i>	Incorporate hiking, walking, bicycling and other linear recreation opportunities within Parks
<i>Objective G</i>	Increase public access to County parks by linking County trailways to local neighborhoods, municipal parks, schools, employment centers, shopping centers and other community facilities
<i>Objective H</i>	Assume ownership and maintenance responsibilities for municipal and other local organizations operating recreation facilities on County-owned properties in need of support.
<i>Objective I</i>	Continue to work with Westchester County Planning Department to acquire, protect and enhance lands for the establishment of linear parks, urban parks, active recreation facilities and open space preservation
GOAL 2	Conserve and enhance the County's natural and man-made assets
<i>Objective A</i>	Protect and preserve wildlife habitats, unique botanical areas and other sensitive ecological areas within County Parks
<i>Objective B</i>	Conduct a County-wide tree canopy assessment study and county park tree Inventory to establish a baseline measure to monitor the health of the forest canopy, as well as prioritizing locations for future plantings

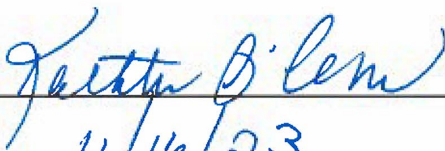
<i>Objective B</i>	Institute a park-wide tree planting program as part of reforestation and landscape restoration efforts to combat the loss of trees within the County park system
<i>Objective C</i>	Establish a native plant nursery at two locations within the park system to support restoration efforts while encouraging the use of native plants from locally sourced plant populations
<i>Objective D</i>	Encourage open space links and greenways to preserve open space and enhance Linear recreation opportunities
<i>Objective E</i>	Provide professional natural, and environmental resource management services, nature interpretation, nature education and outdoor recreational opportunities at parks and nature preserves for all people to enjoy at their leisure
<i>Objective F</i>	Provide and expand overall adventure/outdoor/nature-based program offerings by providing a variety of programs and events for those with similar interests and schedules
<i>Objective G</i>	Provide a deeper appreciation and awareness of nature, the environment, and the benefits of conservation and environmental stewardship
<i>Objective H</i>	Identify, protect and preserve historic and archaeological resources
<i>Objective I</i>	Encourage sustainable agriculture and environmental stewardship through educational programs at the County's two interpretive farms
GOAL 3	Provide comprehensive, year-round recreation opportunities that meet the needs of an ever increasing diverse population
<i>Objective A</i>	Attract and retain an effective and energetic workforce
<i>Objective B</i>	Provide excellent programs and services to meet community needs
<i>Objective C</i>	Using the Westchester County recent recreation survey, identify and respond to survey results covering a wide variety of programming for people of all ages, abilities and interests.
<i>Objective D</i>	Create systems and capacity to ensure successful program planning, coordination and evaluation.
<i>Objective E</i>	Ensure program procedures include guidelines on safe interactions with the public
<i>Objective F</i>	Address programming needs of historically underserved communities
<i>Objective G</i>	Provide desired technology and tools that support excellence and innovation.
<i>Objective H</i>	Provide programs and educational activities to promote a healthier lifestyle for County Residents
<i>Objective I</i>	Renovate/update the recreation centers and add additional program space to accommodate all age groups and abilities.
GOAL 4	Continue to improve the quantity and quality of maintenance of recreation areas
<i>Objective A</i>	Sustain a high level of park and recreation facility maintenance and safety, placing the highest priority on those parks which have the highest degree of utilization
<i>Objective B</i>	Continue the five-year program to replace, as needed, or acquire new maintenance vehicles and equipment, to meet increasing maintenance demands, decrease downtime due to breakdowns and increase operating efficiency
<i>Objective C</i>	Begin a five-year program to repair and replace roofs on County park buildings
<i>Objective D</i>	Begin a five-year program for fuel tank replacement including the study and assessment of existing fuel storage systems, testing of fuel tanks, providing corrective measures and/or replacement of fuel tanks
<i>Objective E</i>	Develop and implement a security plan to protect the public's investment in park facilities
<i>Objective F</i>	Practice environmentally-sound park resource management
<i>Objective G</i>	Improve staff training in parks related responsibilities; pruning, snow removal, small equipment maintenance and building cleaning
<i>Objective H</i>	Increase budget funding to improve appearance and safety of the park and equipment
<i>Objective I</i>	Ensure that all maintenance personnel have required professional certifications

GOAL 5	Partner with other municipalities and other regional organizations to improve on our Parks and Recreation amenities
<i>Objective A</i>	Continue to work with local municipalities to provide access to recreation facilities on County Parkland for youth athletic leagues and tournaments for a variety of sports programs
<i>Objective B</i>	Collaborate with local organizations and non-profits to provide special events and programs for the community
<i>Objective C</i>	Develop "Friends of " programs with citizens and other community groups located near parks to encourage volunteer involvement in park maintenance and improvement
<i>Objective D</i>	Coordinate with Federal, State and regional agencies and organizations to enhance parks and recreation services for County residents
<i>Objective E</i>	Become involved with regional and inter-municipal task force committees to help guide the planning and development of greenway trails and other recreation facilities
<i>Objective F</i>	Partner with school districts, municipalities and other public and private organizations to expand availability of facilities for public recreation.
<i>Objective G</i>	Erect way-finding, park entrance and informational signage to assist all County Park patrons in finding and utilizing parks and recreation facilities
GOAL 6	Develop Creative techniques to finance proposed capital Improvement projects
<i>Objective A</i>	Develop County budget proposals that are constrained within conservative projections of available resources
<i>Objective B</i>	Foster teamwork with other departments (Public Works & Transportation), Budget, Planning) through better communication and attendance at project meetings from the projects inception and through the duration of the project
<i>Objective C</i>	Continue to apply for Federal and State grants as they become available
<i>Objective D</i>	Seek private donations for specific high profile projects
GOAL 7	Provide a wide variety of events and community services which facilitate community unity, engagement and cultural participation
<i>Objective A</i>	Provide special events at locations/parks that are accessible for all and offer a variety of entertainment options throughout the year.
<i>Objective B</i>	Manage and promote popular special events, such as the "Winter wonderland," "Spooktacular Octoberfest," "Woodlands Store Hour," "Mall Walk" and others
<i>Objective C</i>	Provide quality meeting, event and picnic venues for individuals, organizations and corporations
<i>Objective D</i>	Support local farmers and sustainable agriculture through by establishing farm markets and Community Supported Agricultural (CSA) programs
<i>Objective E</i>	Provide divers and enjoyable recreation opportunities to promote healthy lifestyles for people of all ages and abilities

Approved By:

Kathleen M. O'Connor
Commissioner – Parks, Recreation & Conservation

Signature:


11/16/23

Date: